This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 16, 2005. Claims 19 to 30, 40 and 46 remain pending in the application, of which Claims 19, 40 and 46 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 19 to 24, 26, 40, 46 and 48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,991,276 (Yamamoto) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,848,134 (Sekiguchi) and U.S. Patent No. 5,673,205 (Brunson), and Claims 25 and 27 to 30 have been rejected under § 103(a) over Yamamoto in view of Sekiguchi and Brunson and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,404,747 (Berry). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns controlling communications in a video conferencing environment. In one exemplary environment, some terminals may be dedicated video conference terminals that communicate using moving image data and voice data. On the other hand, other terminals may be a personal computer that communicate using still image data and text data, but not voice data. With this type of environment, it has become necessary to find a way for the personal computers to be able to participate in a video conference session. With this in mind, the present invention controls distribution methods for distributing data based on the type of second terminal that the data is to be communicated to. For instance, if the second terminal is a general-purpose terminal, then generated text data and a generated image file is distributed to the second terminal. On the other hand, if the second terminal is a dedicated video conference terminal, then received image data and voice data are distributed to the second terminal by

a predetermined video conference protocol. As a result, users of a personal computer that don't generally have video conferencing capabilities can participate in a video conference session using text chat in conjunction with generated still images, thanks to the control apparatus of the present invention.

With specific reference to the claims, independent Claim 19 is a data communication control apparatus for communicating with a plurality of terminals, comprising a receiving device adapted to receive image data and voice data from a first terminal which communicates image data and voice data to be distributed to a second terminal which communicates via at least text data or voice data, a voice recognition device adapted to recognize the voice data from the first terminal and to generate text data based upon the recognized voice data, an image file generating device adapted to generate an image file on the basis of the received image data, a control device adapted to control distribution of data corresponding to a kind of the second terminal, and a data distributing device adapted to distribute the generated text data generated by the voice recognition device and the generated image file generated by the image file generating device to the second terminal, and to distribute the image data and the voice data by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal, by controlling a distribution method for distributing the data.

Independent Claims 40 and 46 are method and recording medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 19.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of a control apparatus controlling

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distribution of data corresponding to a kind of second terminal by controlling a distribution method for distributing the data, wherein on one hand, text data generated from received and recognized voice data and an image file generated based on received image data is distributed to the second terminal, and on the other hand, the received image data and voice data is distributed by a predetermined protocol for video conference to the second terminal.

As set forth in Applicant's previous response, Yamamoto is merely seen to disclose a video conference system that multiplexes image data and text data, and distributes the multiplexed data to a user terminal. However, as the Office Action concedes, Yamamoto fails to disclose a voice recognition unit that recognizes voice data and that generates text data based upon the recognized voice data. Accordingly, Yamamoto also cannot control distribution of received image data and voice data to a second terminal based on a kind of the second terminal by controlling a distribution method for distributing data.

Sekiguchi is merely seen to disclose the real-time exchange of messages between a computer and a telephone. According to the patent, a server converts text data for the computer into voice data for the telephone, and vice versa. However, like Yamamoto, Sekiguchi is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything with regard to controlling distribution of data based on a type of second terminal by controlling a distribution method for distributing the data.

Brunson is not seen to add anything that, when combined with Yamamoto and/or Sekiguchi, would have overcome the foregoing deficiencies. In this regard, Brunson is merely seen to disclose playing back a soundtrack of a video message to a recipient and conveying an image frame to the recipient in response to receipt of a request

from the recipient. However, like Yamamoto and Sekiguchi, Brunson is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything with regard to controlling distribution of data based on a type of second terminal by controlling a distribution method for distributing the data. Thus, the proposed combination of Yamamoto, Sekiguchi and Brunson is not believed to have rendered the present invention obvious.
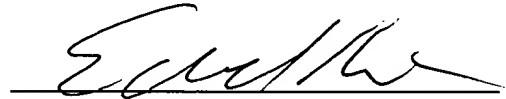
Berry is not seen to add anything to overcome the deficiencies of Yamamoto, Sekiguchi or Brunson, and is also not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with the foregoing references, would have resulted in at least the feature of controlling distribution of data based on a type of second terminal by controlling a distribution method for distributing the data.

In light of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, all of Claims 19 to 30, 40 and 46 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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